November/December 1991

METRO Magazine

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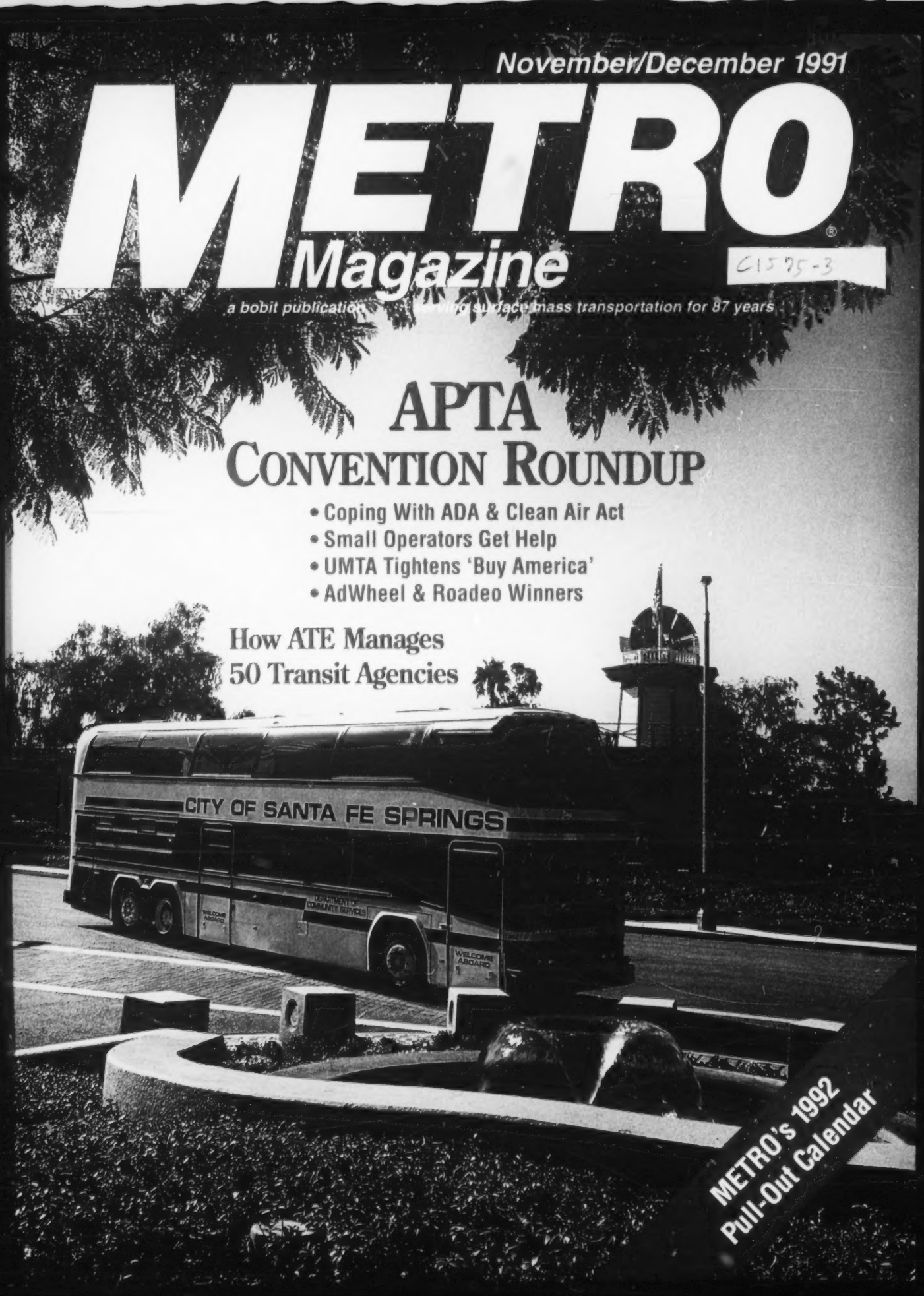
APTA Convention Roundup

- Coping With ADA & Clean Air Act
- Small Operators Get Help
- UMTA Tightens 'Buy America'
- AdWheel & Roadeo Winners

How ATE Manages 50 Transit Agencies



METRO's 1992 Pull-Out Calendar

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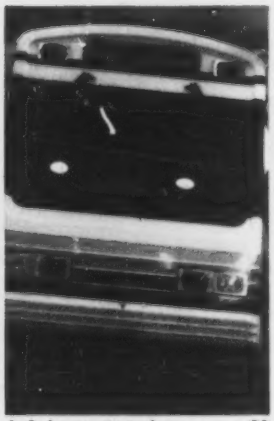

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Cover photo by John Krussink of Neoplan USA Corp.'s double-decker community bus in Santa Fe Springs, Calif.

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ABA American Bus Association

ABP

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Robots work in new LIRR shop

Seventeen robots like the automated guided vehicle pictured help workers at the new maintenance complex for the Long Island Rail Road. Workers can request parts weighing up to two tons from 72 computer terminals. The robot then retrieves the part from storage and delivers it. The robot operates on three miles of guideway. The $381 million facility replaces two turn-of-the-century electric car repair shops. It will work on LIRR's 1,000 cars, which are inspected every 92 days. Yearly, 156 cars will be overhauled. The facility is on 30 acres. The car shop can hold 60 cars and has elevated tracks. The yard holds 102 cars.

Hey, buddy, can you spare $150 billion for transportation?

The Los Angeles County Transportation Commission's (LACTC) revised version of its 30-year transportation plan for the region calls for $150 billion — $10 billion more than previously earmarked.

The plan calls for several rail extensions, electric trolley buses, HOV lanes, 68 percent more buses and other improvements. All new and replacement buses would run on methanol.

The plan is still being worked on by a number of agencies, but so far falls about 50 percent short of environmental goals set by the region's air quality plan.

● LACTC hopes to revive a high-speed rail project of about 70 miles through a public-private venture. The project had earlier stalled on revenue projections insufficient to cover costs.

● The first pair of Metro Red Line cars has arrived from Italy and are being tested in Pueblo, Colo. The Red Line subway is scheduled to open in September 1993. The $1.5 million cars, manufactured by Breda Construction Ferroviarie Ltd., have a maximum load of 300 passengers.

● The Southern California Rapid Transit District has settled with three unions, averting a strike by bus drivers. The unions represent more than 7,000 RTD workers. They will get an average increase of 4.5 percent in wages and benefits each of the next three years.

Keep your trolleys, consultant tells Dayton

A consultant has told the Miami Valley Regional Transit Authority in Dayton, Ohio, cleaner air and the rising cost of pollution control warrant keeping its trolley buses.

Booz Allen & Hamilton Inc. said in a preliminary report of its three-month study that Dayton can afford to keep the trolleys because to abandon them would cost $5 million alone. The diesel buses that would replace them will no longer be available by the end of the century because they will not meet clean-air requirements, one of the consultants reportedly said.

The agency had planned to phase out its 82 miles of trolley lines next year, but the city asked it to reconsider and the consultant was hired.

1991 Top Transit Bus Fleet Gainers

Agency	% Buses Above '90	No. Buses Above '90
1. Orange County (CA) TA	74	327
2. Dallas Area Rapid Transit	37	270
3. Seattle Metro	18	195
4. Wahington (DC) Metro TA	10	159
5. MARTA (Atlanta)	18	120
6. Utah TA	17	76
7. Capital Metro TA (Austin, TX)	28	60
8. Calgary Transit	11	54
9. San Francisco Muni	9	43
Metro TA of Harris County (Houston)	4	43

Chart shows gain in percentage and number of buses from 1990 to 1991 of American and Canadian transit fleets as listed in METRO Magazine's Largest 100 Transit Bus Fleets in the September/October issue. The top gainer, the Orange County Transit Authority in California, is a new agency created from the old Orange County Transit District and several smaller agencies. These top 10 gainers increased fleet size a total of 1,347 buses in 1991.

ElDorado to buy National Coach assets

ElDorado Bus (EBC) Inc. of Salina, Kan., has agreed to acquire certain assets of National Coach Corp. of Chino, Calif.

National, manufacturer of specialty passenger vehicles for shuttle, tour and transit, has filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. The planned acquisition is subject to approval of the Bankruptcy Court.

"We plan to continue production of certain parts of the National product line," says Clare G. Wentworth, ElDorado president. "We plan to run that facility in Chino."

Wentworth says ElDorado has